UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/545
23 October 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
Agenda items 7, 10 and 24

NOTIFICATION BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL UNDER ARTICLE 12, PARAGRAPH 2, OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

LAW OF THE SEA

Letter dated 18 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the note verbale dated 25 July 1996 from the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat (A/50/1028, annex), regarding objections of Saudi Arabia to certain provisions of the Act on the Marine Areas of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, 1993 ("Marine Areas Act"), and make the following clarifications:

1. Even before the enactment of the said Act, there existed a few acts and decrees pertaining to the Islamic Republic of Iran's rights and jurisdiction over its maritime areas, each of which dealt with one or more issues involving the law of the sea. The Marine Areas Act was drafted to consolidate and supplement all previous relevant legislative provisions into a single statutory instrument, taking into account the progressive development of the law of the sea, including the extension of the jurisdiction of coastal States.

2. It should be noted that the international law of the sea comprises various rules and provisions that were codified and/or developed in the 1958 and 1982 Conventions on the Law of the Sea. Therefore, it is hard to believe that there is an international consensus on various rules and practices pertaining to this body of law.

3. There is no provision in the Marine Areas Act to impede navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. The Islamic Republic of Iran does not object

to the freedom of navigation, provided that such freedom is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal States, in conformity with international law.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 7, 10 and 24.

(Signed) Kamal KHARRAZI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative